

The intent of the Sinclair Broadcast Group to use the public airwaves to blatantly promote their own partisan agenda is the best example of the dangers of media consolidation in recent memory. In their own words,
(at <http://sbgweb2.sbgnet.com/index.shtml>)

"Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc. is one of the largest and most diversified television broadcasting companies in the country today. Sinclair owns and operates, programs, or provides sales services to 62 television stations in 39 markets. Sinclair's television group reaches approximately 24% of US television households....."

If they were truly "diversified", they wouldn't be *ordering* their affiliates to air the partisan propaganda piece "Stolen Honor", nor would they have *forbidden* the airing of the Nightline episode earlier this year where the names of the soldiers who have died in the Iraq war were read aloud. The fact that they are one company acting at the behest of just a few people (against the advice of some of their shareholders) and can potentially influence 24% of the US citizenry legally is scary enough- don't give them the "green light" to abuse that power. Furthermore, since Sinclair has already demonstrated that it will abuse that power as often as it is allowed to, I hope that the FCC will do everything in its power to demonstrate to Sinclair that even if they refuse to answer the public or their shareholders, they still have to answer to the FCC.

Sinclair's shallow attempt to make it appear that they are being "fair" by "inviting John Kerry to participate" is laughable. It is obvious that Sinclair has no respect for John Kerry or the public, including Vietnam Veterans (like my father) who have a strong desire to avoid reliving memories from that era. Not only does Sinclair disrespect the public- especially all soldiers- with this cheap and destructive attempt to drum up support for their candidate, they disrespect the FCC itself. They are assuming that the Commission is so powerless that it will not be able to do anything about this; they know it is a violation of their legal obligation to serve the community, yet they have no intention of altering their course because they fear no consequences from the FCC. Fining them heftily would be a start, but if it is within the realm of possibility, I believe they should be prevented from airing this traumatizing piece at all on the public airwaves. They know that many people in the community find their intentions offensive, but perhaps they believe that just because they are not using foul language, the FCC will not hold them accountable. Please don't let them set this dangerous precedent. I strongly urge the Commission to investigate the situation with great speed, before the selfish interests of the Sinclair

Broadcast Group's attempt to further their own agenda using our public airwaves are no longer something that can be handled by the FCC.

While Sinclair shows great contempt for the FCC, they also show contempt for US law in general as they try to circumvent campaign finance rules by giving a corporate in-kind contribution to the Bush-Cheney 2004 campaign. Is this really the kind of corporation the FCC wants to license?

Although this is really a simple legal matter in an objective sense- one in which Sinclair is in violation of the law and the public trust- I must again make a plea on a personal level: In my family, we do not bring up the Vietnam War because my father *will not* talk about it. I know one of the jobs of the FCC is protecting children from things that might be potentially damaging to them on TV, but I see the intentions of Sinclair as infinitely more harmful to the public than anything that happened at (for example) the Superbowl. With the Superbowl, you had no warning, but in this case, you do. Please don't wait to hear that the suicide rates of Vietnam Veterans have gone up after the airing of "Stolen Honor" before you decide that the public's interest is not being served by Sinclair, because I am afraid that is what will happen. So many people were scarred by their experiences in that era and Sinclair's attempt to reopen those wounds and rub salt in them is a disservice to the public, the Vietnam soldiers (including those who became anti-war afterwards) and the soldiers currently serving, who may wonder how history will treat them if they happen to see or hear about "Stolen Honor".